

UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF

8 August 1951

Dear Beetle,

This is in reply to your recent letter which Bill Wyman hand-carried to me, reference the possibilities of your recruiting some men for CIA from our ranger program.

At the time Bill came to see me he had understood from some statement in the press that we had decided to eliminate our rangers throughout the Army. As I explained, this was not the case. Unfortunately, because of the fact that we were operating in Korea in an oriental country, we could not adequately disguise rangers operating in rear of the enemy front lines as was originally intended. On the recommendation of both Matt Ridgway and Van Fleet, we did decide to disband the companies in FECOM. However, the personnel will be used as necessary replacements for the 187th Airborne BCT which remains in FECOM.

No final decision has been reached as yet as to the other part of our ranger program. We may organize a battalion per corps or army instead of the single experimental company per division. Wayne Clark has an idea that we should train a certain number of men in each company so as to raise the standard of our units in patrolling and normal reconnaissance action. This may well develop. Meanwhile, the Ranger Training Center at Benning is continuing its operation but their output is being fully utilized in supporting existing ranger units.

Should a decision be reached not to continue the organization of any ranger units in the Army, we will be glad to keep you advised as to whether any men could be released to CIA for your special programs. We do realize the importance of the missions that you have in mind for them.

Meanwhile, we would be glad to accept and train at the Ranger Training Center at Benning, any CIA personnel that you might wish to have receive this special training. The course has been an excellent one and it might well be useful for certain of your purposes.

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8 Aug 51

If you feel that this would be helpful in any way I would suggest that you have Bill Wyman deal directly with Rube Jenkins who has just taken over G-3. I am sure that he can make the necessary arrangements.

Sincerely yours,

General Walter Bedell Smith
Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D. C.